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ABSTRACT

This report describes various strategies which were implemented to increase reading vocabulary and comprehension on consistently below average test scores of first grade students. A targeted group of 25 students were selected for this process. The objectives included increasing comprehension and reading vocabulary, developing a more positive attitude toward reading, and utilizing critical thinking to increase cognitive skills. The targeted group did not show the expected increase in reading comprehension and vocabulary. Yet, there was a substantial increase in their scores. Post test scores indicated that there was an increase in motivation and in a more positive attitude toward reading. Participation in class discussion utilizing higher order questioning was increased. Methods implemented in this study could facilitate an increase in comprehension and reading vocabulary. Appendices include testing instruments, student data, and graphic analysis of progress. (Contains 21 references.) (Author)

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IMPROVING COMPREHENSION AND READING VOCABULARY IN FIRST GRADE ENGLISH SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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by

Esther Sanchez

A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

June 1993

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Abstract

Improving Comprehension and Reading Vocabulary in First Grade English Speakers of Other Languages. Sanchez, Esther, 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, The Center for the Advancement of Education. Descriptors: Vocabulary Development/ Reading Comprehension/ Elementary School/ English Speakers of Other Languages/ Critical Thinking/ Multiple Choice Tests/ Standardized Tests/ Testing Skills/ Reading Attitude/

This report describes various strategies which were implemented to increase reading vocabulary and comprehension on consistently below average test scores of first grade students. A targeted group of 25 students were selected for this process. The objectives included increasing comprehension and reading vocabulary, developing a more positive attitude toward reading, and utilizing critical thinking to increase cognitive skills.

The targeted group did not show the expected increase in reading comprehension and vocabulary. Yet, there was a substantial increase in their scores. Post test scores indicated that there was an increase in motivation and in a more positive attitude towards reading. Participation in class discussion utilizing higher order questioning was increased. It was concluded that the methods implemented in this study could facilitate an increase in comprehension and reading vocabulary. Appendices include testing instruments, student data, and graphic analysis of progress.

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work i accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed Esther Sanchez
Esther Sanchez

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Student's Name Esther Sanchez

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Observer's comment on impact of the project (handwritten):

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

The setting of this practicum was a small town in South Florida that has developed over the last couple of years. It has provided many of the aspects of a large city with shopping centers, schools, hospitals, banks, hotels and easy access to other large metropolitan areas.

Back in the 1980's this city was primarily a rural community where raising horses was one of the main industries, with only a limited number of small businesses. The city was a city of varied opportunities. With the slogan "Watch Our Gardens Grow" the city has grown from the original 12 to over 5,400 residents and approximately 600 industries; from a rural community to a booming business center. And with the challenge to "come grow with us," the city is ready to take its place as a leading municipality.

Yet, this community has also provided all the pleasures of the small town and a family atmosphere.

People could take a ride on horseback through the vast fields and tree lined lanes or enjoy a bike ride on the miles of bike paths that border the lakes and streets.

Many ethnicities have called South Florida home. This area was largely Hispanic. An estimated 90 percent of the community was Hispanic or of Hispanic descent. The average household size was 4.5, and the average median household income was $21,750.

The student body at this practicum site was reflective of its community which was largely Hispanic. According to the most recent 1991-92 annual school report, 95 percent of the 2,149 students were of Hispanic origin and 31.2 percent were of limited English Proficiency (Appendix A:37).

The faculty consisted of 27 percent White non-Hispanic, 26 percent Black non-Hispanic, and 47 percent Hispanic. Twenty-three percent held Master's degrees and three percent held Specialists. The percentage of beginning teachers was 6.8 percent. The average years teaching experience was six years. One principal and three assistant principals were assigned to this site.

This 11 acre site was established in 1986. It was, in some areas a two story structure with several windows to a room and 35 portables. It did not have a playground or field. The student body was so large the school only housed grades kindergarten thru fourth. The pupil to teacher ratio in the regular program was 21:1. The school offered the regular program, special education, and the program for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), which was quite large due to the schools Hispanic population. A new Program was being implemented this year designed for the low-achieving student.

The Chapter I program was used to improve the educational opportunities of educationally deprived students by helping them: succeed in the regular program, attain grade-level proficiency, and improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills. This was done by formulating small groups, no larger than six students and assigning a teacher or paraprofessional to work with the group daily.

The writer of this practicum worked at this site for three years as a first grade teacher of an ESOL self-contained class. As a first grade teacher the

writer was the first grade level department chairperson and was actively involved in school projects.

The setting of this practicum took place in a carpeted portable located on the west side of the school building structure. There were five long, rectangular windows on the side walls, but the teacher only opened the side facing the school for some sunlight. The portable was rather small, but it had a bathroom on the northern end with a sink and cabinets next to it. It was very well lighted. The students sat at individual desks arranged in groups of six and there were four groups. The groups were in the middle of the room facing the chalkboard at the southern end. The groups made a square, two in the front and two in the back. The room was air-conditioned, and the teacher controlled the thermostat. It was always pleasant. There was no roof from the portable to the main building. Therefore, students used raincoats and umbrellas to leave or enter the room if it was raining.

Problem Statement

Literacy became an extremely important issue in our nation and schools. Students graduated every year unable to read much less the ability to comprehend.

The majority of adults and students never took time to read. Students can develop a positive attitude towards reading if they are motivated and understand what they are reading.

At the practicum site, reading comprehension scores had been consistently lower than the national median of the 50th percentile. According to the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) scores of 1990-1991, all students scored below the 50th percentile. The first graders scored in the 44th percentile (Appendix B:39).

All ESOL students were grouped by level. They could be anywhere from a level one to a level four. Level one was the lowest level. The students in the target group were either a level one or two, which means that when they were tested last June they only advanced one level or none at all. Therefore, they lacked the skills needed for reading comprehension and had a limited oral vocabulary.

Part of the schools improvement plan was the improvement of reading comprehension, critical thinking, and raising test scores (Appendix C:41). Through observation, the need for improvement in these areas seemed to be the first priority.

The background of this community had a great deal to do with the problem. It was a multi-cultural population which was mainly Hispanic. They had a limited vocabulary. Because of their limited vocabulary, they had a hard time reading and understanding what they read.

Many of these students had recently arrived in this country during the last three or four years. Their parents spoke no English and had low paying jobs. They lacked good role models and books to read. This explained their difficulty in comprehension and their limited vocabulary. Students need exposure to books and language in order to learn.

Because of their odd jobs and hours the students' parents did not read on their own or to their children. Therefore, these students did not acquire good reading habits, and were not taught to read for fun and recreation.

In order for these students to function in society they need to develop their critical thinking skills, and learn to use them in every day life. Many times teachers were rushed to teach and students were rushed to learn. Teachers were not always able to carry out their lessons to their full potential.

Too many times details were ignored due to the many objectives that had to be accomplished by the end of the year. However, no one could over look the fact that students had to be taught to think critically.

Students had to be taught to read a passage for understanding. They all too often read because they had to, never looking for the meaning. Many skills needed to be learned such as organizing ideas, locating the main idea, and drawing conclusions.

Reading comprehension was essential in all school subjects in order to successfully complete all the objectives in the curriculum. It was vital that these skills be taught and practiced.

The students in this practicum were not administered the SAT exam. They were in kindergarten and kindergarten is exempt from taking the exam. Yet, just from an observation or conversation with them, there limited vocabulary could be identified. Because of their lack of English they could not read or use skills to comprehend a passage or story. The target group consisted of 15 males and 10 females who came from lower middle class background. They were all Hispanic. To protect the privacy of each student, each member of the group was assigned a number.

This practicum attempted to improve the students comprehension and reading vocabulary through critical thinking skills, raising test scores, and promoting a positive attitude towards reading.

Outcome Objectives

During the time of implementation of this practicum, students were involved in numerous activities and strategies for the mastery of several terminal performance objectives. The outcome objectives for the target group were as follow:

1. Over the 12 week period, 70 percent of the target group would demonstrate an increase in their reading vocabulary by 25 percent or more as measured by a difference in scores on a teacher made oral exam (Appendix D:43).
2. Fifty percent of the target group would show an increase in their reading comprehension by 20 percent or more as measured by a difference in scores on a teacher made pretest and posttest (Appendix E:47).
3. After participation in the 12 week practicum project, 80 percent of the target group would exhibit a more positive attitude as displayed by teacher observation and by comparing the

results of a teacher made attitudinal survey given both at the beginning of the study and at the end (Appendix F:55).

4. Over the 12 week period, 65 percent of the target group would demonstrate an increase in motivation to read by checking out and reading six or more books from the library. The means of measurement would be teacher observation and student reading logs (Appendix G:57).
5. During the 12 week implementation period, 50 percent of the target group would demonstrate better use of higher order thinking skills by 20 percent determined by a teacher made record sheet and teacher observation during class discussions (Appendix H:60).

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

America has always been known as the home for immigrants seeking a new and better life. This was as true as ever as communities all over the country grew from its new foreign-born residents. Watson, Northcutt, and Rydell (1989) stated that by the year 2000, Hispanics are expected to account for 10 percent of all Americans. Sixteen million school age students were Hispanic. This reality of a multicultural population affected the day-to-day operations of the schools. The language barriers made it difficult for students to master academic material.

Watson, Northcutt, and Rydell (1989) said that although Limited English Proficient (LEP) students were able to carry on a conversation about the latest fad, they did not have the sophisticated vocabulary to master subject matter lessons. Evidence from existing literature suggested that the decoding and reading

comprehension skills of poor readers could be improved by assisting them to read material that was too difficult for them to read by themselves.

Moyers (1990) study examined the reading achievement effects for "group assisted reading," a teaching strategy designed to assist poor readers to read difficult material, in which the teacher assisted a group of students to read text material in unison; emphasizing correct phrasing, intonation, and pitch. Subjects were selected from a population of poor readers; 18 received the group assisted reading treatment. The students made high achievement gains on reading comprehension and vocabulary.

Oral story telling was a significant source of vocabulary acquisition. Elley (1989) confirmed that studies of early readers had consistently shown that children who had been read to regularly in their preschool years made rapid strides in their reading and language development at school. The population at this practicum site faces a problem because the majority were not read to in their preschool years. Larrick (1987) reported the U.S. Postal Service in 1984 issued a new commemorative stamp, "A Nation of Readers," which depicted Abraham Lincoln reading to his son. Perhaps,

someone suggested, the postal authorities had to go back 100 years to find a picture of a father reading to his son. It was important to read stories to students in order to model the style of reading. Students could be read to by their teachers, peers, older students and their parents. Choral reading was another concept that could be used to improve and increase a students vocabulary. Mc Cauley (1993) believed choral reading, never failed to excite students' interest in reading regardless of their age, reading level, or level of language proficiency. The most important aspect was that second language learners were able to read choral reading selections with little difficulty. This would improve self-confidence, diction, reading rate, and understanding.

Reading, as a skill, required practice. Sadoski (1985) stated; that students who read tend to become better readers, and the most beneficial way to develop reading ability was not through isolated skills, drill or assessment, but by reading.

Heathington (1989) completed a study on 254 students in grades three through eight with a wide range of achievement levels, from both rural and urban schools, and from all socioeconomic levels. The

findings indicated that the students' reading activities were greatly influenced by the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical changes associated with this age group. The students indicated that there was not enough time for reading, there were too many interruptions when reading, and expressed wishes to be able to select books according to individual interest. This was true for all age groups.

This study highlights the fact that library periods, book talks, and plenty of time to read independently and recreationally were important facets to any reading program.

Students learned concepts from print; developed a more vivid imagination, and a lasting appreciation of literature; they learned the language of books, and acquired greater understanding of the syntax of their language. Lapp and Flood (1983) felt the teaching of reading involved the specialized task of helping students to decode the written, symbolic representation of words. Students should be taught that words are composed of a series of individual sounds. Phonics and reading go hand in hand. It had been said that you can not do one without the other. The fact was that all students learn about letter-sound correspondences as

part of learning to read. Stahl (1992) felt the teacher should provide instruction in a high utility phonic element appearing in the story. The selection of stories that contain a large amount of common phonic elements should be used.

Teachers of young students should recognize the important role they could play in contributing to their students' phonemic awareness by spending a few minutes daily engaging their students in oral activities that emphasized the sounds of language. Research suggested that such activities could maximize their students' potential for a successful experience learning to read.

Doyle (1987) examined the relationship between reading instruction method, word learning proficiency and reading achievement in a study of first graders. The subjects were 78 males and 88 females, some having sight vocabulary instruction, the other a phonic basal program. The high phonic-high sight proficiency group scored highest. Which demonstrated that a combination of methods should be utilized.

Sight words make up a large part of the reading vocabulary. Lapp and Flood (1983) have provided a

number of rules to aid in the development of a sight vocabulary.

1. Use pictures to illustrate the word being taught when it is appropriate to do so.
2. Ask the students to look at the words as you read them.
3. Point to the picture and reread the passage while the students follow the story visually.
4. Encourage the students to read the passage with you.
5. Ask individual students to read the sentences while the other children follow the story visually.
6. After reading the sentence, point out the individual words you are introducing.
7. Discuss the meaning of each word.

Plamberg (1987) suggested in a study which involved elementary-level Swedish speakers learning English, that the pupils wrote down the words and kept them to use in future writing material. This way students could continually see and use the words. Fry (1987) also suggested picture noun cards could be made with the printed word on one side and a picture of the object that word represents on the other side.

Teachers should also work with what students already know. They should learn about the students' prior knowledge and background. Reyhner and Garcia (1989) felt that when useful reading material was not available the language experience approach to reading could be used for students to produce their own language. It would become easier to read, discuss, and understand.

Reading material could be processed in a variety of ways. One could read and remember basic information. One could also take explicitly stated information and use it to make simple predictions or to infer cause and effect. Also, one could evaluate the information read judging its worth or validity. Or finally, one could read information and respond personally, and then try to determine how the author's style of writing and use of language produced such a response.

Early (1990:567) believed, "Children not only need to learn conversational English to function in society, but they also need to gain the language proficiency required to acquire cognitive and academic skills in their subject and content area classrooms and to enter into philosophical and scientific discussions." Classrooms that offered students a variety of

communication systems assisted learning in ways that stimulated imagination and increased understanding. Knowing about reading and writing was not enough. One must make an effort to connect learning to real-life purposes. One must find ways to engage the learner's affective as well as cognitive self through a wide variety of interactions and experiences. Comprehension cannot be fostered by transmitting information from the print to the student's head. Learning occurred when one created a personal interpretation.

Goldenberg (1993) agreed that true education "real teaching" involved helping students think, reason, comprehend, and understand important ideas. He explained the study of an elementary class which was making the transition from Spanish to English. The teacher had read a story to the class and used this story to begin a class discussion, about a complex concept. Drawing on the students' prior knowledge there was greater sophistication and depth of understanding. Therefore, teachers must examine stories to find points for important class discussions.

A study conducted by Goldman (1983) used bilingual students in kindergarten through fifth grade using Aesop's fables, comprehension was measured by story

recall. It was concluded that either language uses the same style of questioning. Questioning strategies can be transferred easily from one language to the other.

The target group consisted of Hispanic students from low income homes. Chall, Jacobs, and Baldwin (1990) conducted a study to learn more about the literacy and language achievement of students from low-income homes. The study consisted of below and above average reading groups in all grades. The needs of the low-income students were not significantly different. The outcome of the study, suggested challenging and direct teaching, combination of structure, and practice reading many books about different topics. The school must become more responsible in increasing language and literacy because these students are not stimulated at home.

Barton (1990) said that teachers could "engage students" by asking oral questions which foster hierarchical thinking. This type of questioning helped develop the students oral language as well as critical thinking skills which were essential for reading comprehension.

To ensure reading comprehension students should understand the meaning of the words they were reading.

Ekwall (1985) felt the use of context clues could be one of the student's greatest helps in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words. Teachers could demonstrate how to use context clues. After that, they could give students sentences missing a word. They could give multiple choice questions the sentence and three choices to fill in the missing word. Then, they could write the first letter of the missing word. The teacher could gradually build and make it more critical and thought provoking to find the missing word.

La Bonty (1988) conducted a study in a small northwestern town using third-grade classrooms to observe what would happen when reading these students unfamiliar words within the oral context of a story. Students hearing the words within the story demonstrated a better understanding of those words. The recognition of the words indicated a step in the process of the development of word meaning.

The fact that students had poor vocabularies and lack the skills needed for reading comprehension and critical thinking was because they did not read enough. Students would much rather watch television. Angelitti (1991) wanted to encourage students to develop love of reading and the ability to think critically about what

they read. In the study of this elementary class the students were selecting what they wanted to read. The teacher had formulated a set of questions that could fit any literature. The class read a book together and the teacher modeled the way the questions could be answered. The students expressed enthusiasm and an understanding of their stories because they were allowed to select what they wanted to read.

A story could also be more stimulating if introduced and chosen according to the needs of the students. When a story is read its shape is created, the characters emerge, and the style in which it is read can make it come to life. Taking a Piagetian view point, some educators would claim that teachers could only arrange for learning to occur but could not teach. Yet, if a little common sense was used when the text got challenging the teacher lets the reader take over. The teacher would then observe if the reader was ready to go past current competencies.

The goal of this practicum was to improve reading vocabulary and comprehension by implementing various skills. In order to succeed the writer had chosen a variety of activities. Due to the fact that an extended vocabulary was important to comprehension, students

would maintain a word box throughout the study. They would write words from the word-a-day and any others used in class they did not understand. Contextual analysis strategies were taught to aid the students in determining the meaning of unknown words. The stories were phonetically oriented to teach decoding skills. Students were guided through the reading, analyzing, and answering of a passage. Higher order cognitive skills were fostered through oral questioning techniques during group discussions. Silent reading time was given, trips to the library were encouraged, junior high student role models were invited to read stories, and students adopted a fourth grader for a reading partner. These methods were chosen to promote and encourage a positive attitude towards reading, because reading skills improve through reading.

CHAPTER III

Method

During the 12 week implementation period of this practicum, 25 targeted students met with the writer every day. The assigned activities took place in different settings including the classroom, school media center, outside the classroom on the grass, and at home.

Week One

Students in the target group were administered a teacher-made pretest to test reading comprehension. Students were also administered a teacher-made oral vocabulary exam. To determine the students' attitude towards reading a teacher-made attitudinal survey was given. Student reading logs were implemented to monitor the students' library reading.

Week Two

Students were given a word-a-day to practice in class and at home; they were also written in a word box to be kept by each student. Students visited the library for story time and to check out books every week.

Week Three

Students were taught the strategy of reading the questions first. The teacher introduced short stories that were phonetically oriented (concentrating on vowels; beginning with short vowels) once a week to students and modeling the process of reading. Students dictated a language experience about a story to generate critical thinking. The Whole Language Approach was used for an integrated language arts.

Week Four

The students in the target group adopted a reader from a fourth grade class. The fourth graders read to them outside on the grass. The writer discussed with the target group how they felt.

Strategies on finding context clues were practiced, demonstrated and used.

Week Five

Students were introduced to making educated guesses.

Every week the story contained vocabulary from prior stories and new vocabulary.

For the duration of the study a five minute silent reading time was held everyday after lunch.

Week Six

The weekly story was read and teacher-directed questions were used to stimulate higher order thinking skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Students from the junior high were invited to read to the class, as role models.

Students wrote some sentences using the vocabulary learned through word-a-day.

Week Seven

The writer made an informal evaluation at this time to see how much progress had been made.

Students were selected at random for the duration of implementation to briefly discuss one of the stories they had read.

Week Eight

The fourth graders visited again to read to the students in the target group.

The teacher continued using questioning strategies that promote higher order thinking skills. This time other stories and poems were added to the discussion.

Students matched vocabulary words with pictures.

Week Nine

The use of context clues was reviewed. The students filled in the blank using the correct vocabulary to finish the sentences.

The teacher also read stories leaving out the ending for students to complete orally.

Week Ten

Students read a story and answered reading comprehension questions.

The students selected their favorite story from their reading log and explained why it was their favorite. The teacher asked questions to continue promoting higher order thinking skills.

Week Eleven

A review of all strategies taught was discussed and practiced.

The fourth grade class visited, but this time the target group read to them. The writer discussed with the target group how they felt.

After practicing a vowel a week, the teacher dictated words and the students identified the vowel sound.

Week Twelve

During the final week of implementation, post testing on the reading comprehension, the oral vocabulary exam, and the attitudinal survey were administered and evaluated.

The only person to be involved in the objectives of the practicum was the writer. There was no help from aides or Chapter I personnel.

The outcome of this practicum was recorded by the writer in the grade book, on a teacher made tally sheet, and on the student reading logs.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The purpose of this chapter was to evaluate the results of this practicum implementation and report on the major findings. This investigation was conducted to assess and improve comprehension and reading vocabulary. The participants were a group of 25 first grade students. This study was conducted during the spring semester of the 1992-1993 academic school year.

The objective of increasing student vocabulary on a teacher made, oral vocabulary exam by 25 percent or more by at least 70 percent of the students in the target group was not met (Appendix I:63). However, the group did average an increase of 18 percent. All of the students showed an increase in scores. The range of increase was four percent to 30 percent.

The objective of increasing student performance on a teacher made, multiple-choice reading comprehension test by 20 percent or more in at least 50 percent of the students in the target group was not met (Appendix J:65). Yet, the group showed an average increase of 12 percent. Two students scored a negative gain. Students

number three and 23 have been identified as being possibly learning disabled. They had a difficult time with language arts even though special methods were applied to help them improve. Eighty-eight percent of the students in the target group showed an increase in scores. The range of increase was two percent to 26 percent.

During the course of this practicum the teacher observed an over all improvement in the attitude students had towards reading (Appendix K:67). There were a total of 240 possible responses, there were 71 positive and 129 negative responses on the reading attitudinal pre-survey. There were 133 positive and 67 negative responses on the reading attitudinal post-survey. Questions 2, 8, and 12 were the most often changed (Appendix F:55). This indicates that the specific activities of sustained silent reading, adopt a fourth grade reader, and the junior high school readers contributed to a more positive attitude toward reading. Questions number 4, 9, and 10 remained unchanged in number of responses. The teacher feels that this is due to the age level of the target group. Another

contributing factor is the low socioeconomic status of these students which reflects the reason why many of them do not own much reading material.

Eighty percent of the target group read six or more books during the 12 week implementation period (Appendix L:69). The average number of books read was eight. Motivation to read was increased by the stimulating discussions on how the student felt when they read and were read to. The teacher observed that as a routine was formulated on reading and discussing their favorite stories, the students' confidence to read and check out books was improved.

Upon reviewing the teacher record sheet for critical thinking, the writer discovered that more students developed self-confidence in answering questions utilizing higher order questioning. One hundred percent of the targeted students became eager to participate in predicting outcomes of orally read open-ended stories. Fewer participated in interpreting characters when stories were read. The students did well in determining fact or opinion and reality or fantasy. The teacher felt that age was again an important factor. The students in the targeted group were young and enjoyed expressing themselves.

In conclusion, most of the objectives of this study were met. Those that were not met did show some degree of an increase. The targeted students' overall attitude toward reading was made more positive, and motivation to read increased. Participation in class discussions utilizing higher order questioning strategies was increased.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Encouraging students to read more would raise test scores which had been greatly important in the area which this practicum was conducted. Because reading comprehension scores on standardized achievement tests had been consistently low the writer felt it was important for students to improve. The results of this implementation showed that when students are exposed to different testing strategies they are more comfortable and produce higher performance. When the student was taught contextual analysis skills, critical thinking skills, motivation through positive role models, and the ability to read in comfortable settings, motivation to read also increased.

The use of phonetically oriented stories from this practicum can be used and adapted to any of the primary grade levels to improve vocabulary and reading comprehension. Although 90 percent of the targeted students showed an increase in score, the 12 week implementation period of this practicum was not

sufficient to obtain optimum results. To receive maximum results, the writer suggests this implementation be an ongoing part of the classroom curriculum. Because the student population at the practicum site were second language learners their greatest deficiencies were in this area. These strategies will become a part of the ongoing instructional techniques used in this writer's language arts and reading programs.

This study was focused on the fact that the students came from a low socioeconomic and minority population. These students needed stimulation in language and their reading attitude. Therefore, contextual analysis strategies, using positive role models, and using the library were necessary and beneficial.

The results of this practicum were communicated to the practicum observer. In addition, the writer contributed the idea of this practicum to her colleagues through the school news letter. A copy of this practicum was placed in the media center at the implementation site for the benefit of any interested educators. Educators are always interested in new ideas that benefit their students.

The writer's final recommendation is that when implemented, the length of time be extended for completion of this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Annual Census

APPENDIX A

Annual Census

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS 6.8

REGULAR PROGRAM PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO 21.1

AVERAGE YEAR TEACHING IN FLORIDA 6

PERCENT OF TEACHERS NEW TO THIS SCHOOL THIS YEAR 12.6

AVERAGE SALARY FOR INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF $32,774.19

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF LEVEL OF EDUCATION	NUMBER	%
Master Degree	25	23
Specialists Degree	3	2
Doctors Degree		

TEACHER SALARY RANGE	NUMBER
$26,500-29,999	55
$30,000-33,999	22
$34,000-37,999	5
$38,000-41,999	3
$42,000 AND OVER	18

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Student Membership 1991-92 — *Student Area Information 1991-92*

	WHITE NON-HISPANIC		BLACK NON-HISPANIC		ASIAN/ AMERICAN INDIAN		HISPANIC		TOTAL	% NOT PROMOTED	AVG. CLASS SIZE	# OF A.P. PUPILS
GRADE	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	1991-92		
K	19	5	1	+0	387	95	4		407	3.1	29.0	
1	23	5	3	1	411	93	6	1	440	2.7	27.5	
2	20	5	2	+0	432	95	5		454	1.4	28.3	
3	23	5	4	1	391	93	2	+0	420	2.2	28.0	
4	13	3	3	1	412	96			428	0.3	32.9	
OTHER TOTAL	98	5	13	1	2033	95	5	+0	2149			

APPENDIX B

SAT Test Scores 1990-91

APPENDIX B

SAT Test Score 1990-91

Standford Achievement Test:

Along with classroom performance, student achievement is measured by how well the student performs on the Standford Achievement Test. Schoolwide scores are one criteria used by teachers and counselors in making instructional decisions that will benefit students.

Median percentiles are those points which separate the distribution of scores into a top and bottom half. The national median percentile is 50. The following table indicates School 1991 Standford Medians by grade level and first grade by ethnicity.

Table 1

1991 Standford Medians by Grade Level

GRADE	NUMBER TESTED	READING COMPREHENSION	MATHEMATICS COMPUTATION	MATHEMATICS APPLICATION
1	258	44	63	52
2	329	28	37	31
3	386	28	36	35
4	344	32	58	36

Table 2

First Grade Scores by Ethnicity

WHITE NON-HISPANIC			BLACK NON-HISPANIC			HISPANIC		
NO.	READ COMP.	MATH COMP.	NO.	READ COMP.	MATH COMP.	NO.	READ COMP.	MATH COMP.
17	70	69				238	44	63

APPENDIX C

School Improvement Plan

APPENDIX C

School Improvement Plan

The students performance on the reading comprehension, mathematical computation and application of the Standford Achievement test will increase by at least 5% for the 1991-92 school year.

The results of Standford Achievement are below the median.

The number of Limited English Proficient Students advancing in English will increase by level for the 1991-92 school year.

The students entering the school for the first time have not been exposed to English as a second language.

APPENDIX D

Oral Vocabulary Exam

APPENDIX D

Oral Vocabulary Exam

NAME: _____

Identify Alphabet

___A	___F	___K	___P	___U	___Z
___B	___G	___L	___Q	___V	
___C	___H	___M	___R	___W	
___D	___I	___N	___S	___X	
___E	___J	___O	___T	___Y	

Alphabet Sounds

___B	___F	___K	___P	___V	___Z
___C	___J	___L	___Q	___W	
___C	___H	___M	___R	___X	
___D	___J	___N	___S	___Y	

Short Vowel Sounds

___A	___E	___I	___O	___U

Long Vowel Sounds

___A	___E	___I	___O	___U

APPENDIX D (Continued)

Reading Dolch List

___about	___blue	___eat	___green	___keep
___after	___both	___eight	___grow	___kind
___again	___bring	___every	___had	___know
___all	___brown	___fall	___has	___laugh
___always	___but	___far	___have	___let
___am	___buy	___fast	___he	___light
___an	___by	___find	___help	___like
___and	___call	___first	___her	___little
___any	___came	___five	___here	___live
___are	___can	___fly	___him	___long
___around	___carry	___for	___his	___look
___as	___clean	___found	___hold	___made
___ask	___cold	___four	___hot	___make
___at	___come	___from	___how	___many
___ate	___could	___full	___hurt	___may
___away	___cut	___funny	___I	___me
___be	___did	___gave	___if	___much
___because	___do	___get	___in	___my
___been	___does	___give	___into	___myself
___before	___done	___go	___is	___never
___best	___don't	___goes	___it	___new
___better	___down	___going	___its	___not
___big	___draw	___good	___jump	___now
___black	___drink	___got	___just	___of

APPENDIX D (Continued)

Reading Dolch List

___	___	___	___	___
___off	___read	___so	___those	___we
___old	___red	___some	___three	___well
___on	___ride	___soon	___to	___went
___once	___right	___start	___today	___were
___one	___round	___stop	___together	___what
___only	___run	___take	___too	___when
___open	___said	___tell	___try	___where
___or	___saw	___ten	___two	___which
___our	___say	___thank	___under	___why
___out	___see	___that	___up	___will
___over	___seven	___the	___upon	___wish
___own	___shall	___their	___us	___with
___pick	___she	___them	___use	___work
___play	___show	___then	___very	___would
___please	___sign	___there	___walk	___write
___pretty	___sit	___these	___want	___yellow
___pull	___six	___they	___warm	___yes
___put	___sleep	___think	___was	___you
___ran	___small	___this	___wash	___your

APPENDIX E

Reading Comprehension Pretest/Posttest

APPENDIX E

Reading Comprehension Pretest/Posttest

Directions:	*Read each passage silently, then choose the best answer to each question. Mark that answer on your answer sheet.*

One morning Maria could not find her glasses. She looked under her bed. She looked on her chair. Her glasses were not there.

Maria walked to school slowly. She could not see well without her glasses. Maria bumped into a tree. "Oh, I'm so sorry!" Maria said.

At last Maria got to school. She sat down at her desk. Her glasses

1. What did Maria do next?

   A go home from school
   B bump into the desk
   C put on her glasses

2. Why did Maria bump into the tree?

   A she did not see it
   B someone pushed her
   C the tree fell down

3. Maria's glasses were

   A on her chair
   B under her bed
   C on her desk

APPENDIX E (Continued)

Mother gave Jose a toy car for his birthday. "Do you know where my car is?" asked Jose. "It is red and white." "I want Mario to see my car." "Mario has a car too. It is blue." "The car Mario has is broken."

4. What color is Jose's car?

   A white and blue
   B red and white
   C blue

5. Who is looking for the car?

   A Jose
   B Mother
   C Mario

6. What happened to Tony's car?

   A it is lost
   B mother took it
   C it is broken

7. Why did mother give Jose a toy car?

   A Jose's car was lost.
   B Jose's car was broken.
   C It was Jose's birthday.

APPENDIX E (Continued)

Cary drew a picture of a boat. She colored the boat blue and yellow.

Cary wanted to make a puzzle out of her picture. She cut up the picture into small pieces. Each piece was a different shape.

Cary smiled, "Now my picture is a puzzle. I like my puzzle," she said. Then Cary had fun putting the pieces of her puzzle back together.

8. What is the story mostly about?

A playing a game
B making a puzzle
C sailing a boat

9. What did Cary do first?

A color her picture
B cut up the picture
C draw a picture

10. Cary's boat was

A yellow and purple
B blue and white
C blue and yellow

11. Cary cut up her picture to

A make a puzzle
B make a shape
C make a boat

12. How did Cary feel about her puzzle?

A She did not like it.
B She was pleased with it.
C She thought it was funny.

APPENDIX E (Continued)

Roy and his father went fishing. They went fishing in a boat. They went to Duck Lake. The boat stopped running, Roy and father pulled the boat in.

13. Roy and his father

A went to the movies
B went fishing
C went to eat

14. What was the name of the lake.

A Lake Cow
B Lake Dog
C Lake Duck

15. They used a

A boat
B car
C airplane

APPENDIX E (Continued)

It looked like rain. Carmen took her new, blue umbrella to school. She put it in a small room with the coats. After school, Carmen looked for her umbrella. But there were two blue umbrellas there! Which one was hers? George said, "My blue umbrella is torn." "My umbrella is old."

16. How many blue umbrellas were in the small room?

A one
B two
C three

17. Why did Carmen take her umbrella to school?

A it looke like rain
B the umbrella was blue
C it was raining

18. Where did Carmen put her umbrella?

A in the umbrella stand
B in the school bus
C in a small room

19. What did George have?

A a blue coat
B an old, blue umbrella
C a new, blue umbrella

APPENDIX E (Continued)

The city has many lights. Juan went to live in the city. Tim, his dog, went with him. They went to live with Aunt Ruth. Juan liked his new home. Tim did not like the city.

20. Where did Juan move to?

A. a big town
B. a new city
C. far away

21. How did Juan feel about his new home?

A He was sad.
B He liked his old home.
C He liked it.

22. What does the city have?

A lights
B trees
C sun

23. Who are they living with?

A mother
B father
C aunt

APPENDIX E (Continued)

The school bus stops three blocks from Jane's house. She walks to the bus stop with Sue. In the winter it is dark in the mornings. They see lots of cars. Sue and Jane look for the lights of the bus. They are always glad to see those lights!

24. Where does the bus stop?

A Sue's house
B Jane's house
C the teacher's house

25. Who does Jane walk with?

A with Sue
B by herself
C with mother

26. How is the weather?

A hot
B cold
C warm

27. What are they happy to see?

A each other
B the bus lights
C the bus stop

APPENDIX F

Reading Attitudinal Survey

APPENDIX F

Reading Attitudinal Survey

Directions:	*This is a survey that will show how you feel about reading. Put an X on the box beneath the response that represents your feelings about the statement.*

YES	NO		
❑	❑	1.	I like reading and read almost every day.
❑	❑	2.	I only read when my teacher or parents say I have to.
❑	❑	3.	Books make good gifts to give or receive.
❑	❑	4.	I go to the library, whenever I can.
❑	❑	5.	I like to check out at least one book.
❑	❑	6.	Reading isn't fun because I do not read well.
❑	❑	7.	I feel I read well and understand what I am reading.
❑	❑	8.	Reading is boring.
❑	❑	9.	There are many books in my home.
❑	❑	10.	When I go to the store I enjoy buying a book.
❑	❑	11.	My parents read to me at home.
❑	❑	12.	When I have free time I like to read.
❑	❑	13.	I never want to read when I am on vacation.
❑	❑	14.	I sometimes see my mother or father reading a book.
❑	❑	15.	Reading tests make me nervous and uncomfortable.

APPENDIX G

Individual Reading Log

APPENDIX G

Individual Reading Log

---

1. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

---

2. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

---

3. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

APPENDIX G (Continued)

---

4. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

---

5. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

---

6. **Title:**

   Author:

   Personal Reaction:

APPENDIX H

Teacher Record Sheet for Critical Thinking

APPENDIX H

Teacher Record Sheet for Critical Thinking

STUDENT	APPLICATION	ANALYSIS	SYNTHESIS	EVALUATION
S-1				
S-2				
S-3				
S-4				
S-5				
S-6				
S-7				
S-8				
S-9				
S-10				
S-11				
S-12				
S-13				
S-14				
S-15				
S-16				
S-17				
S-18				
S-19				

APPENDIX H (Continued)

STUDENT	APPLICATION	ANALYSIS	SYNTHESIS	EVALUATION
S-20				
S-21				
S-22				
S-23				
S-24				
S-25				

LEGEND

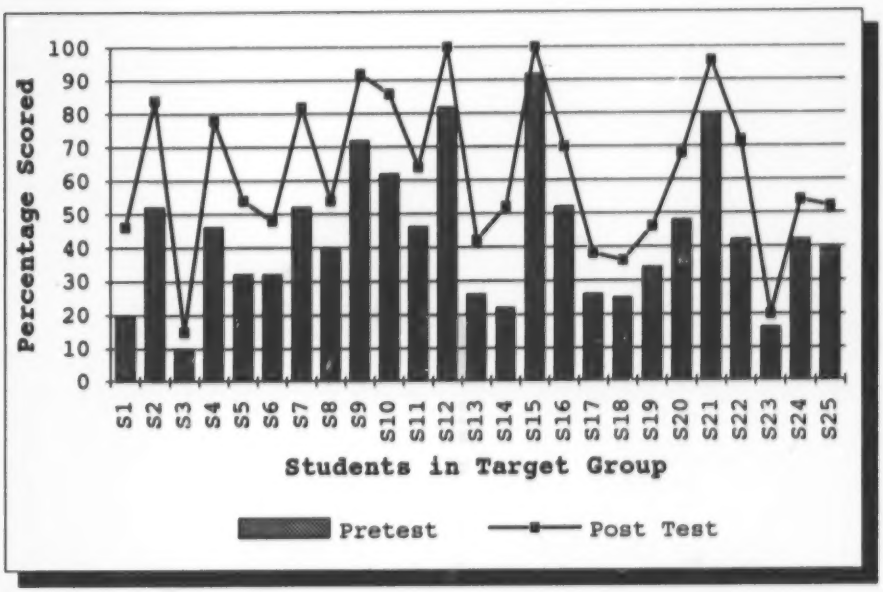
Application:	main ideas, sequence, cause and effect.
Analysis:	predict outcomes, distinguish fact from fiction.
Synthesis:	interpreting character, motives, and responses.
Evaluation:	emotional response to content, making judgements, fact or opinion, reality or fantasy.

APPENDIX I

Increase in Vocabulary on Oral Vocabulary Exam

APPENDIX I

Increase in Vocabulary on Oral Vocabulary Exam



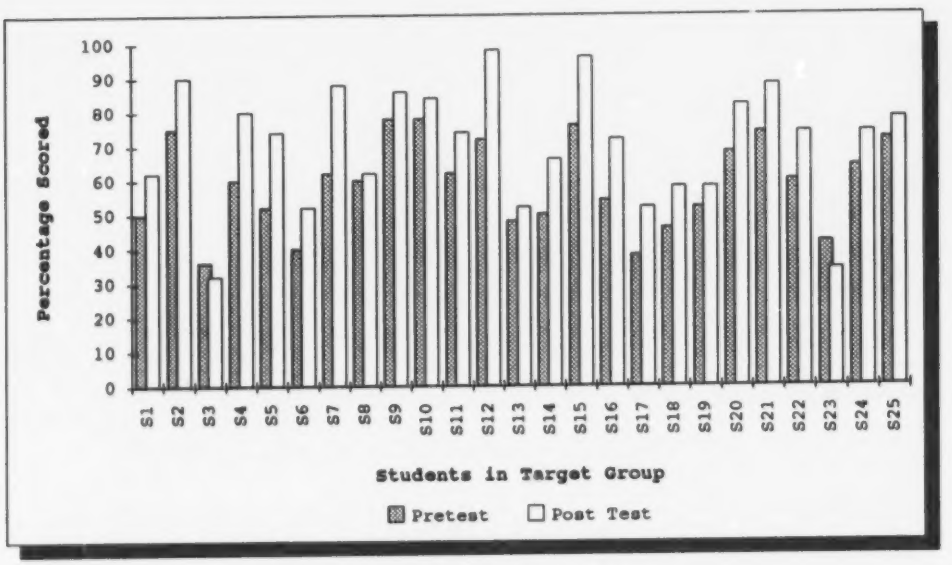
Mean	44%	62%
Median	42%	54%
Mode	52%	54%

APPENDIX J

Reading Pretest/Posttest Results

APPENDIX J

Reading Pretest/Posttest Results



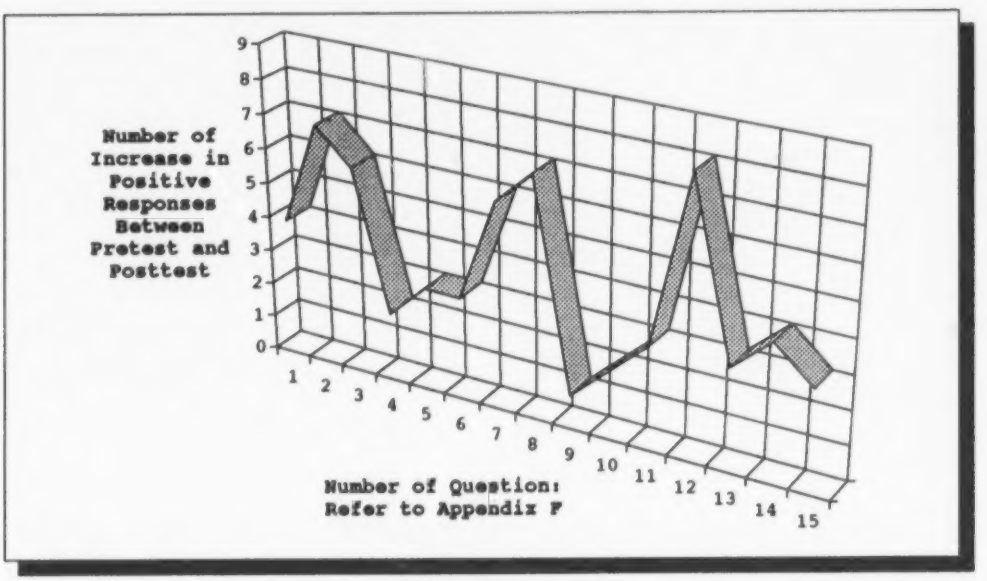
Mean	59%	71%
Median	60%	74%
Mode	60%	74%

APPENDIX K

Increase in Number of Positive Responses on Reading Attitudinal Post Survey

APPENDIX K

Increase in Number of Positive Responses on Reading Attitudinal Post Survey



APPENDIX L

Number of Books Read During Twelve Week Implementation Period

APPENDIX L

Number of Books Read During Twelve Week Implementation Period